

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 481

By Forgety

A RESOLUTION to urge Congress to pass bills for the implementation of the Veterans Affairs New Veterans Choice Program.

WHEREAS, this country can trace its support of veterans back to its origins with the Pilgrims; and

WHEREAS, in recent years those who served their country have become increasingly frustrated with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and its programs; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs has yet to resolve its issues with backlogs for claims and appeals; and

WHEREAS, veterans are still struggling to be able to schedule the appointments they need with their doctors within a reasonable time; and

WHEREAS, more than 53 percent of Tennessee's veteran population are over the age of 60; however, reduced federal funding has negatively impacted establishing new state veterans homes for the aging veteran population; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs has failed to find enough doctors to partner with in order to meet the needs for the fee-based services program; and

WHEREAS, our veterans deserve better customer service from the government they swore to protect; and

WHEREAS, the Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Improvement Act required the Department of Veterans Affairs to develop a plan to consolidate all non-VA programs into a single program called the "Veterans Choice Program" and submit a report on the plan to the House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs by November 1, 2015; and

WHEREAS, on October 30, 2015, the Department of Veterans Affairs sent Congress the required proposal; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we urge the United States Congress to quickly pass any legislation needed for the implementation of the Department of Veterans Affairs' proposal to consolidate all non-VA programs into a single program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we hereby encourage the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to continue to work with all diligence to decrease waiting times for veterans to get the health care they need and deserve.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that appropriate copies of this resolution be prepared and transmitted to the President and Clerk of the United States Senate, the Speaker and Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, the entire Tennessee Congressional delegation, and the Secretary of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.